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War On Poverty Unit Is Accused Of Duping Council On 2 Projects

By CHARLES THORNTON

Youth Guidance Commission director, Phillip L. Farris, yesterday charged the War on Poverty Committee duped the City Council to win approval of 27 summer programs.

Largely at stake in the dispute are two WOPC programs costing more than $40,000. One of the programs, a $20,036 project, would directly reach 45 persons. The city and county are not contributing to the program.

The other, totaling $20,919, is to involve 10 student groups in a Neighborhood Organizing project. The Memphis and Shelby County share of this program is $4,184.

Mr. Brooke, an attorney, yesterday charged that Washington Butler, WOPC executive director, had used the Youth Guidance Commission and the Mayor's Council on Youth Opportunity's names to make the City Council believe on June 11 a 27-project program had been approved by the YGC and Youth Council.

He said the YGC and Youth Council had been charged by Mayor Henry Loeb to coordinate programs with WOPC, yet were uninformed about the additional five programs until after they had been presented to the City Council.

Mr. Butler, appearing stung by the remark, said that WOPC is not legally bound to inform either agency of its plans of projects.

"But it would be good public relations to do so," he said.

Mr. Butler said both bodies were advisory and not policy making, and while they approved the summer projects in general, had not approved the last five which were added "at the last minute."

One of the programs, entitled "MAP-South Life Experience Project," will be used to teach 38 students about contributions made to society by minority groups. Mr Brooke termed the course "Negro history." Each student will be paid $1.60 an hour for attending three hours of classes and for three hours of "work-study experience in poverty areas" five days each week for eight weeks.

Total cost of the program is $20,036.

Under the program, a director-instructor will be paid $100 a week for eight weeks ($800); six student teachers will be paid $1.60 an hour for eight weeks ($2,304) and 38 students will be paid $48 a week for eight weeks ($14,592).

The total personnel cost will be $19,468. Books and other educational material will cost an additional $15 per student, or $570.

James Bowers, YGC executive director and the mayor's official coordinator with the WOPC, objected to the program as being too limited.

"I think we can reach more kids than the 38 in this one program. We've got 9,800 kids between ages 16 and 19 in the poverty areas. Taking into consideration all the job opportunities, we can reach only about 50 per cent of them. This means we are going to have about 4,000 youngsters walking around this summer with nothing to do."

Mr. Bowers said he had made it clear to the City Council that neither the Youth Guidance Commission nor the Mayor's Council on Youth Opportunity approved the WOPC program package.

"I'd like to see the money spread around more, but I'd like to make it clear that this is a dead issue as far as we are concerned because we've made our report, and that's all we can do."

Mr. Brooke said if the money were properly spent, it could reach 10 times as many youths at one-tenth the cost. He wrote letters to Senator Howard Baker and Representative Dan Kuykendall.

Mr. Brooke had not received replies from either one, but Senator Baker told a reporter he was going to investigate Mr. Brooke's complaint.

Mayor Henry Loeb said yesterday there are parts of the summer program he likes and parts he doesn't.

"I'm going to look into it again," he said.

Mr. Butler shrugged off the criticisms. "I don't think there is any program that someone could not say the money could not be better spent. Some things cost more per participant than others. If you employ people, it costs more than providing a service."

Goal of the Neighborhood Organizing Project, as set out by Mr. Butler, is to provide a means for organizing of low-income dwellers in the black and white ghettos of Memphis and Shelby County.

Another aim of the project is to develop job opportunities for young adults, provide tutorial projects directed toward increasing self-awareness, provide provocative discussion groups and to organize neighborhood improvement projects.

Mr. Butler said workshops will be established to develop the "charismatic indigenous leadership," which in turn, will lead and organize around the issues of self-pride and self-identification.

Representatives to a youth policy board will be elected to help develop plans for areas in which to work, said Mr. Butler. He said the first meeting will be in his office tonight at 8.

He said presently 10 groups are participating in the discussions. They are the Invaders, Black Organizing Project (LeMoyne College), Afro-American Brotherhood (Owen College), Black Student Alliance (MSU), City Organizers, Mayor's Council on Youth Opportunity, NAACP Youth Group, Inter-Religious Council (MSU), a student group from Southwestern and student group from Christian Brothers College.

Mr. Brooke said he feared the project would amount to little more than a group organized to decide which stores to boycott.

Mr. Butler denied it. He pointed out alienated groups are dangerous unless they are involved in their society.

"We are trying to get these young people involved and direct their activities toward the good of the neighborhood."

"It's too late to recall the programs, but I'd like to see a lid put on these two programs so the WOPC won't [illegible] [illegible] Brooke [illegible]

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